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A BIBLICAL REFLECTION

Touching Issues of Gender, Socialization, and Discipleship

by Mary Tuomi Hammond

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!"

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her."

(Luke 10:38-42, NIV)

Commentators have looked at this passage a myriad of ways over the centuries. Martha has been caricatured as the "doer" of the pair who couldn't manage to "be" with the Lord like sister Mary. Women have been reminded by popular female authors that hospitality ought to be focused on the guest as *person*, not on impressing guests with a spotless house and delicious food. Feminist scholars have emphasized Jesus' affirmation of Mary's choice to sit "at his feet," the familiar position of male students learning from male rabbis. Traditional scholars see this text as an indication that Jesus encouraged women as well as men to be disciples in a culture that didn't take the discipleship of women very seriously.

Yet there are further issues that intrigue me about this passage which tend to go unmentioned by commentators and popular writers alike. Whether one views Jesus' rebuke of Martha as harsh, gentle, or chiding, the point is irrefutable that Jesus here rebukes a woman for serving. And I find no other passage in the Gospels—or in fact anywhere throughout the scriptures—which ever rebukes *anyone* for serving. And I find it most interesting that Jesus is here dealing with a woman.

In studying this text within its own first century patriarchal context, it is expected that Martha, a woman, would be busily caring for the household tasks accompanying Jesus' special visit. What is less expected is that another woman, her sister, would be ignoring her female responsibilities and "relaxing" with Jesus, whether listening to him teach or simply catching up on the latest news from his ministry!

That Jesus commends Mary for choosing "what is better" than what Martha chose seems, in a first century context, a strange reversal of values. Perhaps Martha's sin included the female tendency toward serving others at a time when choosing to meet her own needs would have been more appropriate.

Regardless of what we emphasize in this short but most amazing encounter between Jesus and two sisters, we can gain an important message about selfhood, selflessness, selfishness, and servanthood by looking at this passage. **Jesus here rebukes someone for serving. And that someone is, strangely enough, a woman. Jesus commends someone for learning, listening, being. And that someone, too, is a woman.**

Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "We want you to do for us whatever we ask."

"What do you want me to do for you?" he asked.

They replied, "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory."

"You don't know what you are asking," Jesus said. "Can you drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared."

When the ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

(Mark 10:35-45, NIV)

It is interesting how this passage, also, has been used within the history of the Church. Most of us have heard many sermons in our lifetime about "whoever wants to become great among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." But how many of us have ever truly noticed the *context* for this teaching of Jesus—an uninformed, inflated request to sit at the right and left side of Jesus in the coming Kingdom?

Just as the previous story dealt with Jesus and two female disciples, this story deals, initially, with Jesus and two male disciples. Matthew places this request for privilege and power on the mouth of the boys' mother—but in both Matthew and Mark's Gospels, Jesus responds directly to the sons. We have the sense that Jesus identifies this desire directly with the designs of James and John.

To reflect on male gender socialization in this first century context is to realize that the religious/political world of public events was primarily the domain of men. The long-awaited Messiah was going to establish his Kingdom. And his male disciples would have a prominent place in carrying forth his rule. It is not so suspect, or out of place, for this question to be on

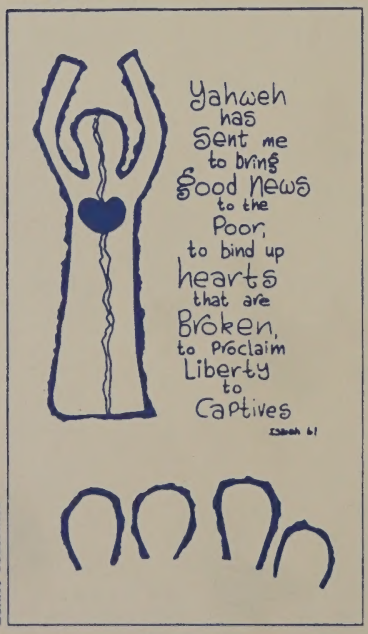
their minds. Yet it is also a question that, most likely, would not have been formed in the minds of first century women disciples, for their social position was much different than that of the men.

In response to this expression by two male disciples of their interest and will to rule, Jesus rebukes them. They don't even know what they are asking for, because the unseen cross is the pathway to the crown.

Later the ten other male disciples hear about this encounter, and are angry with the two brothers. We learn from the Gospels, however, that this question of which male disciple is the greatest is not unique to James and John. While the text tells us the ten react indignantly, we must guess their angry thoughts. Who were James and John, to think *they* would get the privileged positions in the Kingdom? "What about the rest of us?" the ten might muse. "Aren't we just as worthy as these two?"

It seems likely that these ideas were in their minds as we listen to Jesus respond to this dissension among the male disciples. "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you…"

Jesus goes on to teach these men wrestling over issues of power and domination that "whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all." He turns their socialization upside down, rebukes the will-to-power, and encourages servanthood as the pathway to discipleship. Finally, he uses himself as an example—as a man who came not to be served, but to serve others and give his life for many.



Eunice Cudzewicz

* * *

It is too easy to make sweeping generalizations about men and women from a quick glimpse at two brief Gospel texts. In fact, to do so would be poor exegesis. Conversely, to miss the significance of gender socialization and immediate context in both of these texts is just as poor exegesis. And that has happened for centuries.

An important point must be made here. In a first century patriarchal cultural context, Jesus comes at two very different situations, regarding female and male disciples, and challenges particular aspects of the gender socialization of each. His overriding concern is that these persons grow beyond those things that enchain them, that imbalance them, that keep them from becoming all God is calling them to be. At times this can look very different for males than for females. At times it can be very similar. Yet, regardless of gender, the call Jesus sounds to Mary, Martha, James, John, you and me is "Come, whatever your need, be my disciple. Come and follow me."

(NOTE: Refer to the Nov/Dec 1988 issue of *WATCH*word to read the companion article by Mary Hammond entitled "Selfhood, Selfishness, Selflessness and Servanthood.")

THE FIRST EVANGELIST

by Emmett V. Johnson, Director of Evangelism

"Anna gave thanks to God, and spoke about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem." (Luke 2:38)

It was February, 1987. The place was Moscow—the Baptist church there. I was a participant in the International Peace Forum and, as guest of the church, attended the three-hour morning service. I was to bring a "greeting" from Baptists in America. "What's your text?" whispered Sergei Nikolai, my interpreter. "Text? I was just bringing a greeting!" "You have one-half hour for your greeting, and you need a text."

I was floored! But…the Holy Spirit was with me. The text for that Sunday was being read (they followed the church year). It was Luke 2:21-32, the story of Simeon and the presentation of Christ in the temple. The pastor would preach on that text.

My eyes wandered to the next verses, the story of Anna. That was it! So after a few words of greeting, I asked the question, "Who was the first evangelist after the coming of Christ?" I surveyed that immense crowd of expectant people jammed in the aisles. There were a lot of older women in babushkas.

"The first evangelist was a woman. An old woman, aged 84. A widow. She recognized who Jesus was. Simeon had, too, but he proclaimed 'Now let me die!' Anna 'continued to speak of Jesus to all . . . .' Anna was the first evangelist." I worked that point home. It was not foreign to them. History shows that without the babushkas—the grandmothers—Christianity might have died in the darkest days in Russia. Tears in their eyes, listening ever so intently, nodding sometimes in agreement, they were blessed by affirmation in a male- and sometimes clergy-dominated church.

So…it seems only proper that our newest church visitation program just off the press is called *Partners with Anna and Andrew*. The "Order of Andrew" (for the man who was always seen bringing someone to Christ) is all over the place. True to our identity, American Baptists also identify Anna as the model for evangelization.

(Copies of *Partners with Anna and Andrew*, by Carl Gittings and Duncan McIntosh, can be ordered from National Ministries' Literature Resources for $3.95.)

ONE CHURCH'S STRUGGLE WITH INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

This story began a few years ago as the impact of all-male language in the church became more apparent to the pastors of a small congregation situated in a college community. The clergy ministering at the church began to revise hymns and print them in the bulletin on Sunday. Inclusive words for people and God in the scripture readings were substituted for the typical "man," "mankind," "he," "his." Several women in the congregation enjoyed the changes, particularly younger women and female college students. No one dissenting said a word. As time went on, the changes continued being used.

Meanwhile, the old Doxology was still sung. A person came to the pastors privately challenging its masculine imagery in the face of other changes in the worship service. Why was it still used with traditional language? The question was a good one. The Doxology was rewritten and used a few times, then a prayer of thanksgiving was substituted for the Doxology.

Time passed. Weeks, months. Had this really gone so well? Had this transition from traditional to inclusive language really been so simple? During a Board of Deacons meeting nearly a year later, the issue came up unexpectedly. "Why aren't we singing the Doxology anymore? And why can't we sing the old hymns the way we learned them as children? Does this have something to do with feminism or something like that?"

A lively discussion which did not end in agreement ensued. Were the pastors tampering with scripture, changing the intent of the original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts? Why was cherished wording, settled by years of tradition, so quickly laid aside? Was this an unsettling compromise to secular feminism? How adequate is human language in describing our transcendent God? Should the pastors' views be espoused as "authoritative" or not? How should they be expressed?

The Board of Deacons was reticent about allowing one perspective, either traditional or inclusive, to be shared as "the final word" on the topic. So the pastors were asked not to sermonize on the topic, and it was thrown into the domain of the newly formed Worship Committee.

The Worship Committee struggled with it a bit, suggesting that people with dissenting views consider a dialogue on the topic via the monthly church newsletter. Volunteers were solicited, but no takers arose. Time passed yet again.

One day one of the pastors visited a retired woman in the church to jointly plan a Sunday School teaching session. The topic of inclusive language came up. The woman obviously was opposed to inclusive language. She asked the pastor, "When did you get into this inclusive language thing? There was a time when you didn't mind male language. So why do you now? Women can feel included if they want to." She was upset.

The pastor responded, "Why don't you write something about your perspective for the church newsletter? It's time this congregation came to grips with its diversity on the topic, and struggled with that together." The woman agreed to do so.

Thus—seemingly innocently—began three months of diverse correspondence from varying perspectives on the issue of inclusive language. This woman came up with six pages hand-written opposing inclusive language. Another woman wrote a page on a woman's need to be "bilingual," translating male language into her female experience during church worship when traditional language is used. A third woman became so involved in her defense of inclusive language that she did some additional historical research. She wrote such a lengthy response that she volunteered to pay for extra postage on the newsletter if necessary (about $30!). This opportunity for dialogue hit a nerve that had been dormant too long.

The response to the first newsletter, on the surface, seemed mild. As can be the case, people seemed to hear more what they wanted to hear than genuinely seek to learn from one another's position. The dialogue continued into the following issue, where a male church leader wrote his response on the side of traditional language and in support of the ordination of women. Some hurt feelings surfaced as persons with deeply held viewpoints felt unheard.

The following month another response on the side of inclusive language came from a woman in the church. A fiery diatribe against feminism came from another source. However, the only material accepted for printing was that which didn't reiterate what was already said and which did respect and dialogue with the dissenting view.

At this point one of the pastors, in some frustration with the spirit of the dialogue, wrote about learning from one another, hearing one another, being stretched by our diversity. There was no follow-up in the newsletter beyond this point. But where did it leave the congregation, if the pastors weren't to speak about the topic from their perspective on Sunday mornings?

The pastors talked with leaders in other area churches. The nearby United Church of Christ had just re-instituted use of the Doxology. "Let's face it, this issue won't be resolved in the churches in our lifetime," said one church leader there. The local Episcopal Church allowed people to sing whatever was comfortable for them. So, the cacophony of voices allowed for their diversity. Another church managed to print a statement in the bulletin weekly about trying to use inclusive language in worship but was still struggling with the issue within the congregation. A pastor serving as interim in parish-after-parish dismissed the concern as peculiar to our college community, "something that never even came up in all the churches I've served during my lifetime."

However, in this church the issue seemed to fade on surface again. The pastors continued using inclusive language for the most part. Much of the congregation continued using traditional language for God.

Recently a new couple visited the church. The woman noticed quickly that the pastors used inclusive language in worship but others didn't. She asked why, and the whole story was shared. She had deep empathy with the process. "I used to be so adamant, I couldn't sit through anything non-inclusive without feeling deeply

alienated. But over time I've realized what a long process this will be, and how deep are the feelings on both sides."

Will something be printed in the bulletin about the question of inclusive vs. traditional language? Is the issue once again "in remission" since it hasn't been openly discussed for months? Has blending inclusive and traditional language throughout the service helped to make persons from both perspectives feel more included?

The lengthy responses in the newsletter months back betray the emotion that accompanies this issue. The level of theological conviction and intensity of concern displayed are unmistakable. Dealing with the topic of language in the church exposes the deeper issues at stake in our theology—how we view ourselves, our gender, our world, and our God.

This is the story of one small church's journey regarding the use of inclusive language. It is an unfinished journey. And it may be so for some time. This is a generation in transition, and these transitions seem at times very bewildering and confusing. Holding on and letting go, enjoying the stability of old boundaries and pushing ahead to new ones—these are difficulties the contemporary church faces. Must inclusive language, oddly enough, be a dividing issue for the church? Must there be "winners" and "losers" in the battle of traditional vs. inclusive language? Or can this discussion challenge us to explore together new ways of experiencing God, knowing ourselves and accepting one another as companions in the faith?

Perhaps a postscript to this story is in order. The retired woman who opposed inclusive language has been teaching from the Living the Word Sunday School materials, which do use inclusive language, for over a year. Recently she commented to the pastor, "You know, I've actually started to prefer inclusive language!"

At a Worship Committee meeting several months ago, members again discussed the possibility of including a statement in the bulletin on a weekly basis about our need to hold in balance concerns for both traditional and inclusive language usage. A member of the committee replied in surprise, "But I thought all the people concerned with inclusive language had moved!" In other words, perhaps the issue could again become a non-issue.

Further, a few months ago, another parishioner expressed concern that using inclusive rather than traditional language was a root problem that needed to be removed. A woman responded, "Inclusive language is something I really appreciate about our worship services!"

So, the dialogue goes on...and will go on. Meanwhile, we realize that our finite human language which struggles to adequately express human realities, will never be able to contain, apprehend, or fully describe the unbounded nature of our God.

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INCEST—THE CHURCH CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

by Charlotte DeGregoris

I am sixty years old and I have been working out my incest issues for at least thirty years now. Not every day, or even every month, but it has always been there, surprising me with its forcefulness, holding me captive, filling my thoughts at inappropriate times, sometimes controlling my emotions and my behavior. I am beginning to believe that women who have been victims of incest never finish with the trauma of the experience. Certainly for the women I know and the ones about whom I read this is true. However, I write now to say to women, who have been victims, life can be different. You can take charge of the experience and put it in perspective, and live a whole, healthy life.

I also write to say to the church that the church can make a difference; a difference in the lives of child and adult survivors of abuse within the walls of your individual community, and in society in general.

As best I can remember I must have been eight or nine years old when my father began to abuse me sexually. At first it felt nice, but the more intimate he became the more uncomfortable and confused my young mind became, until I finally knew "this isn't right" and I threatened to tell my mother if he continued his weekly? monthly? visits to my bed. His response was "It will break your mother's heart if you tell!" To this day I marvel at my response, for I said, "I don't care, I'll tell her anyway." I was fortunate because the abuse stopped, but this is not the experience of most women. Most were so threatened and controlled that the abuse went on for years.

Victims of abuse grow up with more than their normal share of relational issues. To name a few...trust, self-esteem and self-worth, anger, power, etc. And I am no different than the thousands of others, women and men, who may seem perfectly normal in your eyes, but who see the world very differently than a person who has not had this experience.

What may surprise the reader is that I grew up in a good Christian home. Baptist all my life, I belonged to a small congregation in which my parents were charter members. My father held every office in the church, other than pastor, and was loved by everyone. My mother was a wise, quiet woman whose life centered more around our family and extended family. But she, too, was involved in the church life in important ways which enhanced and encouraged the communal life of our small congregation. My brother, two years my senior, and I were typical children of a lower-middle class family, raised in the post-depression years of the 30s and 40s. At least, that's what everyone believed. How shocked everyone would have been to know just how "typical" we really were.

Why have I chosen to make this public statement now? After all these years, why not forget this, put it away, go on with life? What good will it do to dredge all this up now and make it public?

A simple answer: So I can continue my healing and get on with life and help to give others the courage to do the same. Confronting the experience, believing it, reliving it, feeling the pain, searching for the why, understanding the family history, writing and talking about it are all essential in the healing process. But the answer is broader than this.

First, I have chosen this way because I'm convinced that the statistics "one of every three women and one of every eight men have experienced some form of sexual abuse before the age of 18" are an understatement, and because I am also firmly convinced many of our victims and perpetrators are sitting in our church pews every Sunday morning. I also believe that until pastors, church educators and lay leaders become informed, sensitive and approachable the church will continue to shirk its responsibility to help stop this insidious, destructive, cultural illness. So, in part, I write to help inform.

Secondly, I know from experience that to repress and suppress the feelings that arise from such trauma only magnifies and intensifies the destructive power of the experience. Only by facing it, reliving it, telling it, understanding it, can the pain be exhumed and one can begin to take charge of her or his life. So I write to encourage women and men, whatever the age or status or position, wherever they are, to take charge of the experience. Find someone to help you work it through. You were a child. You were not responsible.

Equally important, I write because I am also convinced that it was the church that helped me to survive. And, it is the church that has helped me to lead a productive life as spouse, mother, seminary educator and friend. In my young years it was the church—those wonderful Sunday school teachers, pastors, youth leaders, lay friends who taught me about God's love and gave me my self-esteem, in spite of the experience. Those people modeled for me God's love. Without the church I very much doubt my life would have been as rich and as whole as it has been.

So what can the church community do to help?

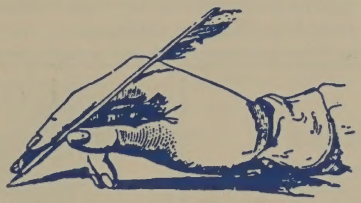
First, become informed. Become aware and sensitive. There are many excellent books which will help any concerned person begin to recognize the signposts of abuse. Purchase a few good resources and make them available in your library. Find a woman in the church who might be interested in becoming the resource persons on the subject and support that person's training, both financially end emotionally.

Secondly, educate concerned persons about the resources within the community, women's centers, abuse programs, sexuality programs, and support groups. Display information regarding these centers in prominent places within the church. Persons may never feel comfortable coming to someone within their own community, but will take advantage of resources in other areas. Posting this information gives people permission to seek the help they need.

And, finally, become a place where this issue is discussed openly and compassionately in an accepting and non-judgmental atmosphere. This will make it possible for persons in your congregation to feel there is a safe place in which to share their pain and stories. The first step to healing is finding someone who will believe and help them find the support and nurturing necessary. By being available and accepting, by providing an atmosphere for "telling the secret," by listening and being non-judgmental, by modeling God's love for these scarred and hurt victims, you can help those who have been abused to survive and know they are valued and worthwhile.

This is not to say many won't need counseling or therapy. However, the church can help the process begin.

The church can make a difference. Perhaps your church already has made the difference in someone's life—she or he has just never been able to say so.



A PASTOR'S OPEN MEMO

(Published in the November 7 issue of NewStory of the First Baptist Church of Berkeley, acknowledging "Women in Ministry Sunday")

FROM: Dale K. Edmondson
TO: Women Preparing for Ministry in American Baptist Churches
RE: Facing the Big Barrier

Despite American Baptists' long (and rightly-valued) tradition of ordaining women to Christian ministry, you—realistically—will face impediments to the exercise of your ministry as women. There always seem to be special and particular challenges in one's ministry that are unique to who one is and where and when one serves. In this day, for women, I fear that challenge is full acceptance into pastoral ministry.

For the most part, the theological issue of women in ministry has been laid to rest. Scholars and leaders in the central stream of the Protestant Church have helped us hear the story of God's action in the faith community without its being obscured from us at this point by cultural biases. We acknowledge (if we hadn't before) that God calls women into the "set apart" ministries of the church just as God calls men.

I believe the challenge today is, instead, an entrenched (and largely unadmitted) sexism within the ministry itself which creates painful, destructive and cruel impediments to the exercise of ministry by the whole of the company of those whom God has called.

And disturbing though it is to acknowledge, study is now showing that this prejudice is found primarily, not among the lay women of the church—as the popular myth would have us believe, but rather among the ordained male establishment of the church.

At base, this is a Gospel issue. And it's an issue which called women of courage and competence, such as you, will have to do battle with in the next generation. We, as committed disciples of Jesus, must commit ourselves to support you in your venture through continuing advocacy, encouragement and prayer.

PATRICIA GUNDRY TO ADDRESS SOCIAL ACTION BREAKFAST

Patricia Gundry, author, speaker and talk show guest, will address the Social Action Breakfast at the 1989 Biennial in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, June 22. Her speech will support the theme of the breakfast, Decade of the Churches in Solidarity with Women.

"I am a Baptist by background and by persuasion," Ms. Gundry said. "I see the church as a body of equal members. Rulers and officers only mean service and servants to me. I see the body of Christ on earth as a living organism with all its parts needing to work together as equals for that body to remain healthy."

Ms. Gundry went on to say, "Many of us, both men and women, believe there are things in the church that need changing. This is a recurrent need, periodically necessary to revitalize and rejuvenate the church. The deadening process of institutionalization must be regularly cut back, cleared out, and refreshed. We can incorporate our desire to change what is already here with our work to admit women into full opportunitied status in the church.

PATRICIA GUNDRY

She added, "Right now the church needs us to tell it where it needs to change. And maybe it isn't comfortable for us to tell, or for the church to hear it. But to be healthy and whole, we need to tell, and the church needs to listen. Then we need to take our rightful places ministering to each other from what God gives us to share.

"What we are trying to do is keep the body that is the church healthy and whole—to make it more whole than it has been since the first century. We want to restore its female components, not because they are female, but because they are people. Christ's body needs all his people."

She describes herself humorously as "a Baptist pastor's wife for five years, a Theology professor's wife for eleven years (same man, different jobs). I have four children, collect cookbooks, and am presently married to a publisher (still same man)."

Ms. Gundry has at least five books to her credit, including *Neither Slave Nor Free* and *Woman Be Free*. She has been published in numerous journals such as *Moody Monthly, Daughters of Sarah, Christianity Today*, and *Wittenburg Door*.

Among her many speaking engagements, Ms. Gundry counts the Distinguished Lectureship Series at Wheaton College Graduate School, Seminar on Women's Roles at the Moody Bible Institute, keynote speaker for the Christian Association for Psychological Studies

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Convention, and speaker and workshop leader at a Youth Specialties National Youth Workers Convention.

Ms. Gundry has appeared on several radio and television shows including "The Chicago Show," "Ask the Expert," "Of Cabbages and Kings" (all in Chicago) and "Futuretalk in Kalamazoo."

For ticket information, consult the biennial mailing on meal functions.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE WOMEN AROUND JESUS

by Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendel, tr. John Bowden
Crossroad: New York, 1986

Dr. Moltman-Wendel has performed a valuable, even profound, service to the church in writing this relatively brief (144 pages) book. It should provoke discussion among theologians and preachers, and I hope that it will find its way into the hands of laity, especially women's and men's fellowship groups.

The book is a brilliant plea for a new hermeneutic that women need to develop to tell their own story out of the biblical record, and to address the male-dominated voices that prevent us all from hearing the biblical message in its original and continuing freshness. One catches a glimpse of the promise for the development and utilization of this new hermeneutic which Dr. Moltmann-Wendel refers to as imagination.

Let me give you a feel for Dr. Moltmann-Wendel's exegesis from one opening paragraph, a commentary on Mary of Bethany (Luke 10:39; John 11:5, 28-33; John 12:1-8).

"Mary of Bethany suffers the fate of many women: her voice is not loud, what she says is not original, her story is not dramatic. Her behavior is not noticeable, her conduct is modest. She seems sympathetic, but by the next time people have forgotten her name and confuse her with another woman who has made more of an impression." (pg.53)

Dr. Moltmann-Wendel's book, chapter by chapter, illustrates an exegetical style and skill that I find uplifting and satisfying. In each chapter she provides a careful narrative, exegetical background, and a history of tradition's interpretation of a number of women: Martha (useful, but worthless); Mary of Bethany (in the shadow of her sister); Mary Magdalene (a great sinner?) the unknown woman who anointed Jesus (an unknown story); the group of women in Mark (a subversive story); Matthew and the Mothers (the old order falls apart); Joanna a Lucan Lady. I highly recommend this book and trust that Dr. Moltmann-Wendel will write for us, more fully the New Testament Theology of Women she ably has begun.

Dr. Gary D. Smith, Pastor
First Baptist Church
Pella, Iowa

THE ADDICTIVE ORGANIZATION

by Anne Wilson Shaef and Diane Fassel
Harper and Row: San Francisco, 1988

In *The Addictive Organization*, Schaef and Fassel maintain that addiction is the "missing piece" needed to explain the sickness in many of today's organizations. An addiction is any substance or process that has taken over a person's life to the point of powerlessness. The distinction between substance and process addiction makes the idea of addiction applicable to an organization as a whole, since there it is the process that is the abused element.

If, as Schaef and Fassel state, 96% of our population is involved in the disease of addiction, either as active or recovering addicts or as co-dependents, the issue is indeed grave. They describe the impact on organizations of key person addicts and of co-dependents, and they describe the impact when it is the organization itself that is the addictive substance or the addict. Obviously, the most difficult of these

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scenarios to change is the latter in which an entire organization exhibits the characteristics of an individual addict. While the addictive organization is the most difficult it is also the most rewarding to work with; identifying appropriate changes is hard, but once healing begins the entire organization can be transformed.

While many organizations are now taking seriously the need to help employees with substance addictions—the proliferation of EAPs (Employee Assistance Programs) witness to that—few are looking at the organization as a whole as either an addictive substance or as an active addict. This approach, which describes the societally approved workaholism as a major symptom of the disease, can enable organizations to look more closely at their processes and structures and to become healthier places for all who are in contact with them.

I believe that everyone who is intimately involved with organization—and, of course, all of us are—can gain fresh insight from *The Addictive Organization*; however, I feel it will be most useful to consultants and counselors who have some background in working with addictions and who are closely involved in working with organizations.

Annie Marie LeBarbour
Hilton, New York

Intervening in Family Violence

The Pastor's Role
June 19, 1989
9 a.m. —4 p.m.

A Pre-Biennial Event
for Pastors
and Professional Church Leaders
focusing on
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Child Sexual Abuse
Elder Abuse

Marquette University
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  North Park Theological Seminary
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June 19, 1989

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